DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 345 152 CG 024 219

TITLE	Teenage Pregnancy and Parenthood Issues under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.
INSTITUTION	Office for Civil Rights (ED), Washington, DC.
REPORT NO	ED-OCR91-14
PUB DATE	Jul 91
NOTE	23p.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Adolescents; Day Care; Dropout Prevention; *Dropouts; *Elementary Secondary Education; Federal Programs; Parenting Skills; *Pregnant Students; School Counseling; *Special Needs Students
IDENTIFIERS	Prenatal Care; *Title IX Education Amendments 1972

ABSTRACT

This pamphlet has been prepared for elementary and secondary school administrators, teachers, counselors, parents, and students. It describes school retention problems associated with teenage pregnancy and parenthood and the requirements pertaining to these issues contained in the U.S. Department of Education regulation implementing Title IX. Statistics on births to teenagers, the overall dropout rate, and dropout rate for females because of pregnancy, marriage, or parenthood are provided. The pamphlet also includes information on approaches and programs that schools have developed to address the educational needs of students who become pregnant, get married, or have children while still in school. The approaches are grouped under those applicable for administrators, those for teachers, and those for counselors. Types of programs described include prenatal care programs; parenting skills programs; day care programs; and dropout prevention programs. It is noted that these approaches and programs, however, are not legal requirements under Title IX. The addresses and phone numbers for the 10 regional offices of the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education are included. (ABL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

CG024219 ED345152

TEENAGE PREGNANCY AND PARENTHOOD ISSUES

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights
Washington, D.C.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

TEENAGE PREGNANCY AND PARENTHOOD ISSUES UNDER TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1972

U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights
Washington, D.C. 20202-1101

July 1991

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Department of Education (ED), Office for Civil Rights (OCR), is responsible for enforcing several laws prohibiting discrimination in federally assisted education programs or activities. These laws include Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits discrimination based on sex. Title IX extends to instructional programs, as well as to other benefits and services offered by school systems in receipt of federal financial assistance.

On April 18, 1991, the President announced ***AMERICA 2000****: An Education Strategy. It is a bold, complex, and long-range plan designed to move every community toward the six national education goals that the President and the Governors adopted in 1990. Consistent with* ***AMERICA 2000****, the Office for Civil Rights has instituted a National Enforcement Strategy designed to help protect equal educational opportunity for all students. Providing equal educational opportunity to pregnant students is one of OCR's National Enforcement Strategies. The goals enumerated in* ***AMERICA 2000****,*

and the National Enforcement Strategy, will help in our nationwide crusade -- community by community, school by school -- to make America all that it should be.

This pamphlet has been prepared for elementary and secondary school administrators, teachers, counselors, parents, and students. It describes school retention problems associated with teenage pregnancy and parenthood and the requirements pertaining to these issues contained in the ED regulation implementing Title IX. The pamphlet also includes information on approaches and programs that schools have developed to address the educational needs of students who become pregnant, married, or have children. These approaches and programs, however, are ***not*** *legal requirements under Title IX.*

IMPACT OF PREGNANCY AND PARENTHOOD ON THE DROPOUT RATE

Marrying, becoming pregnant, or having a child while in high school are factors that are strongly linked to dropping out

of school. A major ED study, "Dropout Rates in the United States: 1988," cites only two behavioral factors significantly associated with dropping out of school: marriage and/or pregnancy; and, to a lesser degree, a history of discipline problems in school or problems with law enforcement officials.

Pregnancy is the leading reason for females to drop out of high school. Every year nearly 500,000 teens give birth. Almost half of the unmarried teens who have a child before age 18 will never complete high school. Nationally, the overall dropout rate is 17.3 percent. Forty-three percent of the females who drop out do so because of pregnancy, parenthood, or marriage. The problem is not limited to racial or ethnic minorities; in fact, 58 percent of pregnant teens are white.

The economic prospects for these dropouts are gloomy. Teenagers who become mothers double their risk of ending up on welfare. Although teenagers who drop out of school for reasons other than pregnancy, parenthood, or marriage often return, both male and female students who drop out because of these factors are less likely

to complete high school. Additionally, only 2 percent of teenage mothers enter college.

Few students will need a quality education more than these pregnant and parenting teens. Their future rests squarely on their young and inexperienced shoulders -- on their ability to grab hold of the opportunities available to people who opt for hardwork, discipline, and self-control. Pregnant and parenting teens need not confront their future all alone.

Before the passage of Title IX, students who married, became pregnant, or had children were often treated punitively and sometimes dismissed from school. Today, Title IX prohibits discrimination based on sex in the application of any rule concerning student pregnancy, parenthood, or marital status. Encouraging students who become pregnant or who marry to stay in school will have a positive impact on their lives, their spouses' lives, and their children's lives. The nation as a whole also will benefit from having a generation of young adults who are better educated and more economically self-sufficient.

TITLE IX REQUIREMENTS REGARDING TEENAGE PREGNANCY AND PARENTHOOD

Title IX provides that:

> *No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.**

**Educational institutions which are controlled by a religious organization may be exempt from Title IX. The Title IX statute states: "This section does not apply to an educational institution which is controlled by a religious organization if the application of this subsection would not be consistent with the religious tenets of such an organization." For application of this provision to a specific institution, please contact the appropriate regional office cited at the end of this brochure.*

The ED regulation implementing Title IX specifically prohibits discrimination against a student based on her pregnancy or childbirth. In addition, the regulation prohibits a school from applying any rule concerning a student's parental, family, or marital status which treats students differently on the basis of sex. Schools may not bar pregnant students from **any** *part of their education program, including specific classes such as an honors class or program, or from any of the extracurricular programs, such as interscholastic sports or the debate team. Students cannot be expelled from school because of pregnancy. Schools may implement special instructional programs or classes for these students, but they must be offered on a voluntary basis and be comparable to regular classes. Additionally, when a student returns to school after giving birth, she must be allowed to return to the same academic and extracurricular status as before.*

Male and female students who may require medical certification for participation in certain activities must be treated equally. A student who is pregnant or has given birth may be required to submit medical certification for school participation **only** *if this type of*

certification is required for all students who have been under the care of a doctor. A student who has been hospitalized due to childbirth, for example, should not be required to submit a medical certificate for re-entry to school if a certificate is not required of a student who has been hospitalized for other types of medical treatment.

If special programs or special schools exist for students who are pregnant or who have children, schools may not require these students to enroll in or transfer to these programs. ***Such coercion is illegal.***

Additionally, recipients that offer these special schools or programs must ensure that they provide educational quality and academic offerings similar to those in the regular program.

APPROACHES FOR ADDRESSING THE EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS OF TEENAGE PREGNANCY AND PARENTING

Educators are increasingly concerned about the needs of pregnant and parenting students in our schools. Administrators, teachers, and school counselors are seeking ways of

providing the best opportunity for these students to continue their education and maintain their academic progress. Schools can provide leadership in coordinating the provision of education, health care, and child care services needed by pregnant and parenting students, as well as leadership in combating the myths surrounding teen pregnancy and parenting. Listed below are approaches used by some elementary and secondary schools to deal with the educational issues associated with teen pregnancy, marriage and parenting while complying with Title IX. These approaches are ***not*** *legally mandated by Title IX or the ED regulation.*

Administrators:

- *Encourage the superintendent's office and the school board to acknowledge the problem of teenage pregnancy and to do what is necessary to help pregnant and parenting students maximize their education.*

- *Follow-up to determine the reason behind each student's decision to leave school before*

graduation. Collect and analyze this information to see the impact of marriage, pregnancy, or parenthood on your district's dropout rate.

- *Consider administering a voluntary survey to parenting, pregnant, or married students to determine ways the school district could help them stay in school.*

- *Encourage school boards to set policy that clarifies the intention of the schools to be responsive to the needs of pregnant, married, or parenting students.*

- *Prepare guidance materials to assist teachers, school nurses, and counselors in responding to these students' needs so that they might stay in school.*

- *Have the school district's attorney provide advice on any prevailing local or state law related to the provision of equal services based on sex, pregnancy, parenting or marital status.*

Teachers:

- *Phone pregnant students who have dropped out of school to encourage them to return.*

- *Encourage administrators to develop policy expressing a commitment to equal treatment of all students, regardless of their pregnancy, parenting, or marital status.*

- *Request in-service workshops or speakers who can share information on the issue.*

- *Inform school counselors of a pregnancy so they can encourage the student to remain in school.*

Counselors:

- *Anticipate the tendency to drop out of school and advise pregnant and parenting teenagers of the importance of staying in school. Let them know of any existing school assistance which may be available to them.*

- *Conduct followup counseling with pregnant students after they drop out of school if you provide counseling for students who drop out for other reasons.*

- *Encourage the establishment of school policies and programs for pregnant and parenting teenagers. Counselors may take a leadership role in determining the nature of the policies and programs needed.*

- *Set up support groups to help pregnant, parenting, or married students to stay in school.*

- *Advise librarians, teachers, pregnant, and parenting students of books and materials that may be useful.*

- *With the permission of the students, advise their parents of the availability of programs and services to keep the students in school and to maintain their educational progress regardless of pregnancy, marital status, or parenthood.*

c *Provide information on the General Education Development certificate program to all students who drop out of school so that they might obtain this accreditation.*

PROGRAMS FOR PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS

Some school districts have gone beyond preventing discrimination against teen parents and pregnant students by initiating programs to influence students to stay in school and acquire the skills needed for the responsibilities of a family. Schools can provide leadership in coordinating the provision of education, health care, and child care services needed by pregnant and parenting students. These programs can reduce the dropout rate, give comprehensive prenatal care, and improve the health of student mothers and their children.

Most of the programs described below are supplementary or noncurricular and are offered to pregnant, parenting, or married students in addition to regular academic coursework.

- *Prenatal Care Programs: Pregnant students may need to learn about nutrition, drug abuse, exercise, and caring for themselves while pregnant. Some schools have developed courses for credit, special classes during free periods, and prenatal care services after school. Prenatal care programs may include both pregnant students and their male partners, who can give invaluable support during pregnancy and after birth.*

- *Parenting Skills Programs: These programs provide information and training in parenting skills and child development. The program includes courses in childbirth, child health, and infant stimulation. Some programs include school nurseries where students gain practical experience in diapering, feeding, and bathing infants. Life skills courses can also be included to teach teen parents (both male and female) how to organize their home lives so they can continue and complete school.*

- *Day Care Programs: These programs help keep parenting students in school by offering infant and toddler day care. The programs also enhance child care and parenting skills.*

- *Dropout Prevention Programs: These programs identify potential dropouts, contact them, and respond in ways that will encourage them to remain in or return to school.*

If you wish additional information about the OCR program, write or phone the OCR regional office which serves your state or territory. The addresses and telephone numbers are listed below.

Region I

Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont

Office for Civil Rights, Region I
U.S. Department of Education
J.W. McCormack Post Office and
Courthouse, Room 222, 01-0061
Boston, MA 02109-4557
(617) 223-9662; TDD (617) 223-9695

Region II

New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands

Office for Civil Rights, Region II
U.S. Department of Education
26 Federal Plaza, 33rd Floor
Room 33-130, 02-1010
New York, NY 10278-0082
(212) 264-4633; TDD (212) 264-9464

Region III

Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia

Office for Civil Rights, Region III
U.S. Department of Education
3535 Market Street
Room 6300, 03-2010
Philadelphia, PA 19104-3326
(215) 596-6772; TDD (215) 596-6794

Region IV

Alabama, Florida, Georgia,
North Carolina, South Carolina,
Tennessee

Office for Civil Rights, Region IV
U.S. Department of Education
Post Office Box 2048, 04-3010
Atlanta, GA 30301-2048
(404) 331-2954; TDD (404) 331-7816

Region V

Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota,
Ohio, Wisconsin

Office for Civil Rights, Region V
U.S. Department of Education
401 South State Street
Room 700C, 05-4010
Chicago, IL 60605-1202(312) 886-3456;
TDD (312) 353-2541

Region VI

Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi,
Oklahoma, Texas

Office for Civil Rights, Region VI
U.S. Department of Education
1200 Main Tower Building
Suite 2260, 06-5010
Dallas, TX 75202-9998
(214) 767-3959; TDD (214) 767-3639

Region VII

Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri,
Nebraska

Office for Civil Rights, Region VII
U.S. Department of Education
10220 North Executive Hill Boulevard
8th Floor, 07-6010
Kansas City, MO 64153-1367
(816) 891-8026; TDD (816) 374-6461

Region VIII

Arizona, Colorado, Montana,
New Mexico, North Dakota,
South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming

Office for Civil Rights, Region VIII
U.S. Department of Education
Federal Building, Suite 310, 08-7010
1244 Speer Boulevard
Denver, CO 80204-3582
(303) 844-5695; TDD (303) 844-3417

Region IX

California

Office for Civil Rights, Region IX
U.S. Department of Education
Old Federal Building, 09-8010
50 United Nations Plaza, Room 239
San Francisco, CA 94102-4102
(415) 556-7000; TDD (415) 556-6806

Region X

Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, American Samoa, Guam, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands

Office for Civil Rights, Region X
U.S. Department of Education
915 Second Avenue
Room 3310, 10-9010
Seattle, WA 98174-1099
(206) 553-6811; TDD (206) 553-4542

ED/OCR91-14

☆ GPO : 1991 O - 303-437 : QL 3